

performances, including "Mock Doctor or Dumb Lady Cured" (Fielding's adaptation of Molière's play "Le Medicin malgré lui") and a short play written by Irving. The evening closed with an "elegant extemporaneous address" by the Principal on the subject of the advantages of science. Again, praise of both the students, who had made such great advances in a short time, and the teacher was lavish. These periodic examinations continued through at least 1796, but because so few eighteenth century newspapers remain to report on them, we can only assume that the trustees and parents continued in their support of the schoolmaster.

While "Preceptor" at the Academy, Irving was responsible for the formative educations of many of North Carolina's early leaders. Those students mentioned in the three newspaper articles of 1794 mentioned above included Mssrs. Guion, Forbes, Pasteur, Barron, Cobb and Gaston. William Gaston was later to gain national repute as a jurist when he served as State Supreme Court Judge from 1833 to 1844. He was a North Carolina representative to Congress from 1813 to 1817, in addition to his eleven terms in the state legislature, and he is popularly known for his composition of the state's anthem. Perhaps the most famous of all those students who ever attended the New Bern Academy, Gaston subsequently took a deep interest in the institution. For approximately thirty-five years, he was a trustee of the school and served as president of the board from 1817 until his death in 1844. His own education at the Academy was of short duration, being confined to less than a year while he was at home in New Bern restoring his health. Before November, 1793, he attended school at George